



**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
2ND FLOOR, CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
CITY HALL BUILDING, TWO CIVIC CENTER PLAZA
FEBRUARY 13, 2012
4:00 P.M.**

The El Paso Historic Landmark Commission held a public hearing in the City Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, City Hall Building, February 13, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

Chair Riccillo called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

The following Commissioners were present:

Commissioner Joe Riccillo, Chair
Commissioner Joel Guzman
Vice-Chair Ricardo Gonzalez (4:09 p.m.)
Commissioner Randy Brock
Commissioner James Booher
Commissioner David Berchelmann

The following City Staff were present:

Ms. Providencia Velázquez, Planning, Historic Preservation Officer
Ms. Cynthia Osborn, City Attorney's Office, Assistant City Attorney
Ms. Debbie Hamlyn, Deputy City Manager, Community Services
Ms. Irene Ramirez, Assistant City Engineer, Engineering & Construction Management

I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC – PUBLIC COMMENT

None



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CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Ms. Velázquez requested Commissioners move agenda item 7. **A.** Discussion on revised plans for San Jacinto Plaza to the forefront.

MOTION:

Motion made by Chair Riccillo, seconded by Commissioner Berchelmann and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF ITEM A. ON OTHER BUSINESS TO THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING.**

NOT PRESENT FOR THE VOTE:

Vice-Chair Gonzalez

II. REGULAR AGENDA – DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Certificate of Appropriateness

1. **PHAP12-00001:** Block 233, Campbell Addition, Sly pt of Blk 233 & 234
 & 235 & vacated alleys btw & pt of vacated streets adj
 to blks, City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas
- Location: 420 N. Campbell
Historic District: Independent
Property Owner: 420 Campbell LLC
Representative: Raul Rodriguez
Representative District: #8
Existing Zoning: C-3/H (Commercial/Historic)
Year Built: 1900
Historic Status: Landmark



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Request: Certificate of appropriateness for the expansion of a concrete slab to accommodate the construction of a new seating area, a pergola, and a one story addition housing bathrooms

Application Filed: 1/11/2012

45 Day Expiration: 2/25/2012

Ms. Velázquez gave a PowerPoint presentation and stated the Historic Preservation Office recommends APPROVAL of the proposed scope of work based on the following recommendations:

The Magoffin Historic District Design Guidelines recommend the following:

- New additions should be planned so that they are constructed to the rear of the property or on a non-character defining elevation.
- Additions should complement the original structure, but not necessarily attempt to duplicate or copy it.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend the following:

- New additions will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property.
- The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

The following Commissioners, Staff and members of the public commented and/or asked questions:

1. Chair Riccillo
2. Commissioner Booher



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3. Mr. Rodolfo Morales, architect representing the applicant, was open to any suggestions the Commissioners may have.
4. Commissioner Guzman
5. Vice-Chair Gonzalez
6. Commissioner Berchelmann
7. Ms. Velázquez suggested Corten, rather than concrete, for the screening wall. Commissioner Booher responded Corten would be an excellent option; it would be very much in character of the building and cost-effective.

MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Guzman, seconded by Commissioner Berchelmann and **CARRIED TO APPROVE THE ITEM WITH THE LITTLE STRUCTURE WHICH IN THIS CASE IS A BATHROOM, THE PERGOLA DESIGN AND THE LITTLE CONCRETE WALL/PONY WALL/BOOTH WALLS, THE FINAL MATERIALS TO BE SELECTED BY THE ARCHITECT AND APPROVED BY THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER, TO BE SOME MATERIAL COMPATIBLE WITH THIS BUILDING.**

AYES: Commissioners Guzman, Brock, Booher and Berchelmann

NAY: Vice-Chair Gonzalez

Motion passed. (4-1)

2. **PHAP12-00002:** Block 1 Radford Terrace 1 & 2 (14366.04 SQ FT), City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas.
Location: 2138 Radford
Historic District: Austin Terrace
Property Owner: Gary and Irma Brooks
Representative: Gary and Irma Brooks
Representative District: #2
Existing Zoning: R-4/H (Residential/Historic)
Year Built: 2000



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Historic Status: Non-contributing
Request: Certificate of appropriateness for the partial enclosure of a rear patio
Application Filed: 1/23/2012
45 Day Expiration: 3/08/2012

Ms. Velázquez gave a PowerPoint presentation and stated the Historic Preservation Office recommends APPROVAL of the proposed scope of work based on the following recommendations:

The Magoffin Historic District Design Guidelines recommend the following:

- New additions should be planned so that they are constructed to the rear of the property or on a non-character defining elevation.
- Additions should complement the original structure, but not necessarily attempt to duplicate or copy it.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend the following:

- New additions will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property.
- The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

The following Commissioners, Staff and members of the public commented and/or asked questions:

1. Commissioner Guzman
2. Commissioner Booher noted some windows were curved, others were square
3. Dr. Irma Brooks, property owner



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MOTION:

Motion made by Chair Riccillo, seconded by Commissioner Booher and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AS PROVIDED.**

3. Addresses of property HLC Commissioners have requested that HLC staff review or investigate and provide a report to the HLC. If no addresses are submitted in advance and listed under this agenda item, Commissioners may announce such addresses under this agenda item. Discussion on property announced at this meeting will take place during the next regularly scheduled meeting. February 13, 2012 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the February 27, 2012 meeting. February 27, 2012 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the March 12, 2012 meeting.

Chair Riccillo noted that today was the deadline for HLC members to add properties for the next meeting; additionally, the next meeting is the deadline for the following meeting.

- A. Magoffin Villas at 915, 917, 1001 Magoffin Avenue and 1000, 1008, 1010 Myrtle Avenue

Ms. Velázquez gave a PowerPoint presentation and explained that the wrought iron fence is in place; however, the fence in the front is different from the fence in the rear. Specifically, the fence on Myrtle Avenue has more design. Staff will talk to the owner, should the owner not comply Staff will notify Code Enforcement.

Vice-Chair Gonzalez noted the finials on the fence on the Magoffin Avenue side which are appropriate for the neighborhood.



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Chair Riccillo recalled Commissioners approving a motion stating the fence must match the already approved fence. He clarified the fencing in the rear was already approved and portions of it are more decorative than others. One portion of the rear fence is similar to the new fence at the main façade, therefore, there is no violation.

Regarding the fencing on Myrtle, Vice-Chair Gonzalez was not concerned with the dissimilar fence details. He suggested Commissioners keep track of where these fences are on the property to prevent encroachment of the simple, modernistic fence in a more historic area.

B. Fall Mansion at 1725 Arizona Avenue

Ms. Velázquez explained that there was a media event at the Fall Mansion today; Commissioners can read all about it in the newspaper tomorrow. She has asked the Project Engineer to schedule an open house for Commissioners once the project is complete. The Fall Mansion is very close to completion. Ms. Velázquez stated they have done a very good job. In some cases leaded glass windows were installed to match the original historic leaded glass windows, most likely at an enormous expense. The exterior has been completely cleaned up and it looks very good. At this time, the City is still looking for a tenant.

MONUMENT SIGN

Ms. Velázquez spoke to the Project Engineer about the monument sign design and explained the Commissioners' concern. She suggested placing signage on the retaining wall. The Project Engineer responded the monument sign was quite expensive. At this time, there is no plan to take the sign down.



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For the next agenda, Chair Riccillo requested Staff find out what the height is for that sign.

Vice-Chair Gonzalez stated the monument sign was not included in the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Osborn referred to the sign ordinance and City policy whereby all city projects come before the HLC.

Commissioner Booher asked Staff if the monument sign complied with the Code. He felt that there was something not quite right regarding the sign.

Staff will research the height of the sign and if the sign complies with the Code.

Chair Riccillo reminded Commissioners that a Historic Preservation Specialist was assigned to this project.

C. Houston Elementary at 2851 Grant Avenue

No new information.

D. Alamo Elementary at 500 South Hills Street

No new information.

E. 1033 Upson Drive

Ms. Velázquez explained tomorrow is the deadline and Staff has not received an application for paint removal. Tomorrow Staff will contact Code Compliance to open a case and start sending violations.

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F. El Paso High School sign

Commissioner Guzman thought the El Paso High School sign did not go through the HLC process.

Ms. Velázquez responded it did not; furthermore, El Paso High School is not locally designated. Therefore, Staff and Commissioners do not review any plans, etc.

Chair Riccillo asked Staff to research whether or not El Paso High School was listed in the National Register.

Ms. Velázquez will research that request for the Chair. She explained that if it is listed in the National Register and if the school is using federal funds, then the State steps in. However, if the school is listed in the National Register and not using federal funds, then this sign did not require a review.

H-OVERLAY PROPERTIES

Vice-Chair Gonzalez stated this is one more property that, over the years, was always considered to be an H-overlay property much like the Labor Temple and the R.E. McKee building. He wondered if this was a case of lost records.

Ms. Velázquez responded Staff has carefully researched, read, reviewed and no, this is not a mistake, it has never been designated.

Chair Riccillo remembers the previous Commission requesting H-Overlays on six properties. Staff researched those six properties and discovered that five of those six properties already had H-Overlays on them; however, the H-Overlay designation was not in the system. *Chair Riccillo asked Staff to research past meeting minutes listing those properties.*



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Ms. Velázquez clarified those six properties were Independent.

Commissioner Guzman explained there are so many non-contributing properties within historic districts right now that some of these properties should be removed. Commissioner Guzman explained the burden of maintaining the exterior of properties within these districts is on the property owner. He requested Commissioners consider removing several non-contributing properties from historic districts in order to remove the burden of compliance from a property owner.

Ms. Velázquez responded there is a list of Independent structures.

Chair Riccillo requested Staff leave El Paso High School, not "sign", on the agenda just to verify whether or not it has an H-Overlay on it.

HLC Staff Report

4. Update on Administrative Review Cases since the last HLC meeting for the properties listed on the attachment posted with this agenda.
(See Attachment "A")

No comments from Commissioners.

Planning & Economic Development Department Reports

5. None.

Visionaries in Preservation Report

6. None.



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NOTE: The following agenda item was moved to the beginning of the agenda.

Other Business

7. A. Discussion on revised plans for San Jacinto Plaza.

Prior to the discussion, copies of the PowerPoint presentation were distributed to Commissioners and members of the public. (Copy of presentation on file)

Ms. Debbie Hamlyn, Deputy City Manager, Community Services, gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the revised plans for San Jacinto Plaza.

The following Commissioners and City Staff commented and/or asked questions:

1. Ms. Hamlyn noted that there will not be restrooms at the Plaza.
2. Commissioner Guzman suggested the proposed canopy over the Los Lagartos sculpture be more formal with classic Greek and Roman vintage.
3. Vice-Chair Gonzalez
4. Chair Riccillo
5. Commissioner Berchelmann
6. Ms. Irene Ramirez

The following members of the public commented:

1. Ms. Veronica Soto, Executive Director, Downtown Management District, urged Commissioners to support the revised plans for the San Jacinto Plaza.
2. Mr. Nestor Valencia, Chair, Committee of the San Jacinto Plaza Redesign Review, explained an original, 80% to 90% restored; PCC 39 street car is currently located at Third Avenue and Oregon Street downtown. The owner is willing to sell, lease or negotiate with the City. Mr. Valencia thanked City Staff and the San Jacinto Plaza Redesign Review Committee members.



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3. Mr. Miguel Juarez, citizen, explained that he remembers an artist who did a lot of tile work here in El Paso. He could not remember the artist's name; however, he thought would be an excellent opportunity to incorporate the artist's tile work within the San Jacinto Plaza sidewalk steps. Regarding the Los Lagartos sculpture refurbishing, Mr. Juarez asked Ms. Hamlyn what the timeline was. Additionally, Mr. Juarez wondered if the City was planning any kind of Grand Re-Opening ceremony once the project is completed.

Ms. Hamlyn responded the sculpture refurbishment would be timed with the general construction project. The City will definitely have a Grand Re-Opening ceremony. Regarding the PCC 39 trolley, Ms. Hamlyn stated she will meet with Mr. Valencia and Mr. Apodaca (trolley owner).

B. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for January 23, 2012.

Chair Riccillo asked Commissioners if they had any additions/corrections/revisions. There being none.

MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Guzman, seconded by Chair Riccillo and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 23, 2012.**

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Berchelmann

C. Discussion on the Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines.

Item was postponed to the next meeting.

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D. Discussion on the San Jacinto Plaza non-contributing status.

Ms. Velázquez referred to Ordinances 010917 and 010877 included in the meeting packet.

Vice-Chair Gonzalez explained that the ordinances verify what he has been saying all along, that the City designated all of the downtown, including the San Jacinto Plaza, as an H-Overlay. That is a zoning action, an H-Overlay carries with it whatever the zoning ordinance says it does. He referred to Ordinance 010917 and stated City Council could have very easily removed the H-Overlay on non-contributing properties but City Council did not do that. It left the H-Overlay for all properties in the Downtown Historic District; it simply exempted the non-contributing property from the Guidelines. Meaning Commissioners do not need to use the Guidelines when ruling on Certificates of Appropriateness for non-contributing properties.

To clarify, Vice-Chair Gonzalez said that anything that is done on a non-contributing property in the Downtown Historic District has to come to this Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness and when that occurs the Guidelines do not apply. Whatever historic features Commissioners believe are appropriate for a piece of property in the Downtown Historic District is at the discretion of the Commission.

Chair Riccillo explained the whole argument is that Commissioners have had two different attorneys tell Commissioners two very opposite things. Additionally, Staff is currently updating the Downtown Historic District Guidelines. The Downtown Historic District Guidelines state the San Jacinto Plaza is a contributing property. Chair Riccillo explained that because of the H-Overlay and the non-contributing status on the San Jacinto Plaza, it does not mean that Commissioners do not issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. However, Commissioners have been told they do not even have the right to provide a Certificate of Appropriateness.



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Ms. Osborn explained the Ordinances discussed today are outdated; the Section numbers referred in the Ordinances no longer exist. Ms. Osborn recalled Legal Department Staff found an Ordinance specifically related to the San Jacinto Plaza. Because this is an issue, Ms. Osborn will get this in writing and have this addressed at this next meeting. Ms. Osborn explained that she is filling in for Ms. Cortez who is on leave but should be back for the February 27th HLC meeting.

Ms. Velázquez reiterated the San Jacinto Plaza does have an H-Overlay and is still part of the Downtown Historic District; however, the Legal Department informed Staff and Commissioners that the Plaza was considered non-contributing. Because it is considered non-contributing it does not have to following the Historic District Guidelines. According to the map, the Plaza was not listed as contributing; however, most parks are not.

Chair Riccillo added that any vagueness in the Ordinance would be clarified in the Downtown Historic District Guidelines.

No further business from the Commissioners.

MOTION:

Motion made by Chair Riccillo, seconded by Commissioner Guzman and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN THE HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION MEETING AT 5:50 P.M.**



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